

The University of Liverpool

Monitoring visit report

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Type of provider: Higher education institution

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Monitoring visit: main findings

Context and focus of visit

From October 2018, Ofsted undertook to carry out monitoring visits to all newly directly funded providers of apprenticeship training provision which began to be funded from April 2017 or after by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and/or the apprenticeship levy. This monitoring visit was undertaken as part of those arrangements and as outlined in the 'Further education and skills inspection handbook', especially the sections entitled 'Monitoring visits' and 'Monitoring visits to providers that are newly directly publicly funded'. The focus of these visits is on the themes set out below.

The University of Liverpool provides a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in a range of sectors. It has been training apprentices since February 2019. Apprenticeship provision is offered in the school of health sciences within the university.

At the time of the visit, there were 77 apprentices in learning. All apprentices study the level 7 advanced clinical practitioner apprenticeship. Apprentices make up less than 1% of the university's student population.

Themes

How much progress have leaders made in ensuring that the provider is meeting all the requirements of successful apprenticeship provision?

Reasonable progress

Leaders and managers have a clear strategy to establish an ambitious curriculum. They have developed the level 7 advanced clinical practitioner apprenticeship with employers to meet the skills needs in the region. Leaders and managers work in partnership with several NHS trusts and Health Education England to provide trained advanced clinical practitioners for the health sector.

Leaders ensure that lecturers are experienced and well qualified. Lecturers have both professional and academic experience to deliver high-quality training for apprentices. Lecturers retain their professional accreditation and maintain their occupational currency by completing sector revalidations. Leaders are currently recruiting staff for new coaching roles to develop further the quality of education that apprentices receive.

Leaders and managers carefully consider the well-being and workloads of staff. They provide a wide range of support for staff. For example, staff have access to free counselling sessions, and mental health and well-being support.

Leaders and managers ensure that apprentices are well prepared for their final assessments. They provide workshops to support apprentices to prepare effectively. Apprentices that progress to their final assessments achieve high grades.

Managers' systems to track apprentices' progress in developing new knowledge, skills and behaviours are not robust. Apprentices that fall behind are not always identified by managers quickly enough. They do not always receive the support required to help them catch up in a timely manner.

Leaders and managers' process for collecting, recording and using information about what apprentices already know and can do is not yet effective. A skills scan and learning needs analysis have been recently implemented. However, not all apprentices have their gaps in learning identified. For those that have, it is not always clear how this information informs the planning of learning to meet apprentices' individual needs.

Those responsible for governance are suitably experienced to carry out their roles. They carefully monitor the progress that leaders make in providing a high-quality education for apprentices. They have provided leaders with scrutiny and challenge to improve the recording of the progress that apprentices make.

What progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that apprentices benefit from high-quality training that leads to positive outcomes for apprentices?

Reasonable progress

Apprentices develop substantial new knowledge, skills and behaviours as a result of their apprenticeship. Apprentices develop advanced clinical skills in intravenous nutrition and non-medical prescribing. They develop their initiative and leadership skills effectively. Apprentices use these skills to independently manage cohorts of patients with acute soft tissue injuries and support colleagues in accident and emergency departments.

Managers plan the curriculum in a logical way so that apprentices can incrementally build their knowledge and skills. Apprentices learn about the principles and context of an advanced clinical practitioner before completing clinical modules that are matched to their roles and responsibilities, such as physiotherapy and orthopaedics.

Apprentices are supported well by their lecturers to produce high-quality academic work. Apprentices use academic literature and clinical guidelines, such as the Royal Pharmaceutical Society competency framework, to support their work. Apprentices complete reflective case studies which allow them to critically evaluate their professional practice.

Managers coordinate on- and off-the-job training with employers effectively. They ensure that apprentices have the time they need to complete their off-the-job training. This supports apprentices to swiftly develop skills that help them to be

successful at work. For instance, apprentices can run clinics independently by developing knowledge and skills in the use of Botox to reduce blepharospasm and hemifacial spasms.

Most apprentices benefit from regular reviews of their progress with their lecturers and employers. This supports apprentices to understand the progress they are making, and what they need to do to improve. However, the frequency of these reviews for a minority of apprentices is inconsistent. This results in these apprentices not making the progress of which they are capable.

Lecturers' action planning for apprentices is inconsistent. Too often, lecturers' targets are focused on the completion of tasks rather than identifying the knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices need to learn. Consequently, not all apprentices have clear targets that are focused on developing gaps in their knowledge and skills.

How much progress have leaders and managers made in ensuring that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place? Reasonable progress

Apprentices feel safe and know how to keep themselves and their patients safe. They know how to report any concerns they may have about themselves or others. Apprentices complete extensive training on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty with their employers. The university provides high-quality online resources for apprentices to support and consolidate the training they receive from their employers.

Leaders have effective procedures for monitoring and referring safeguarding issues and welfare concerns. They have links with external agencies, such as social services and independent domestic violence advisers. They use these links to support apprentices well with any concerns that they have.

Leaders and managers place a high priority on keeping apprentices safe. They have completed an appropriate 'Prevent' duty risk assessment and action plan. All members of the safeguarding team are suitably experienced and qualified. All staff, including the designated safeguarding lead and deputy, receive appropriate training on safeguarding and the 'Prevent' duty. However, the systems used to record this training need to be strengthened.

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